

## Representative Cary Condotta

P.O. Box 40600  
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

# 2011 Legislative Review

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State Representative  
**Cary Condotta**

12th Legislative District

## 2011 Legislative Review

### Rep. Cary Condotta

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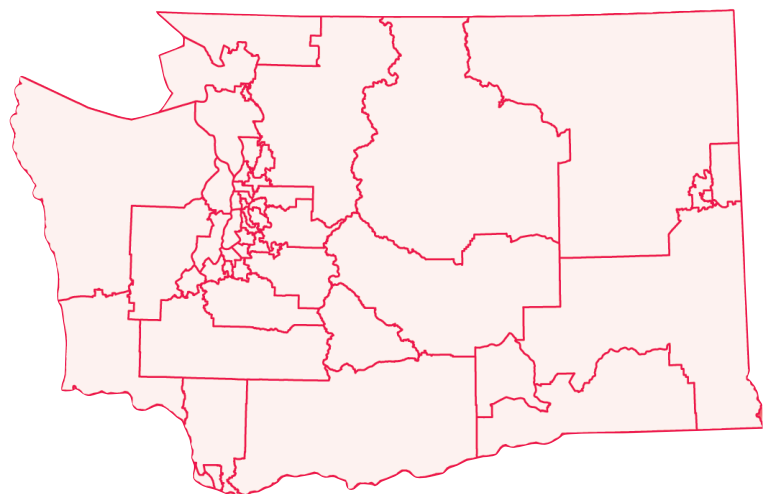
*If you would like to sign up for my e-newsletter, visit my webpage and click on "sign up for my e-mail updates" icon. You can also send me your e-mail information.*

### Committees:

- Labor and Workforce Development  
Ranking Republican
- Business and Financial Services
- State Government and Tribal Affairs

## Redistricting:

While we have no statewide elections this year, it is important to remain engaged. There may be three important initiatives on the ballot this November and our state is currently going through the redistricting process. All 49 legislative districts will have new boundaries for the 2012 elections. Plus, we will have a new congressional district giving us a tenth representative in Washington D.C. I do not expect our legislative district to change much. However, we may have a congressional district spanning the Cascades. The landscape of politics is ever-changing and it is essential to remain aware of the changes. You can learn more at [www.redistricting.wa.gov](http://www.redistricting.wa.gov).



Existing legislative district boundaries

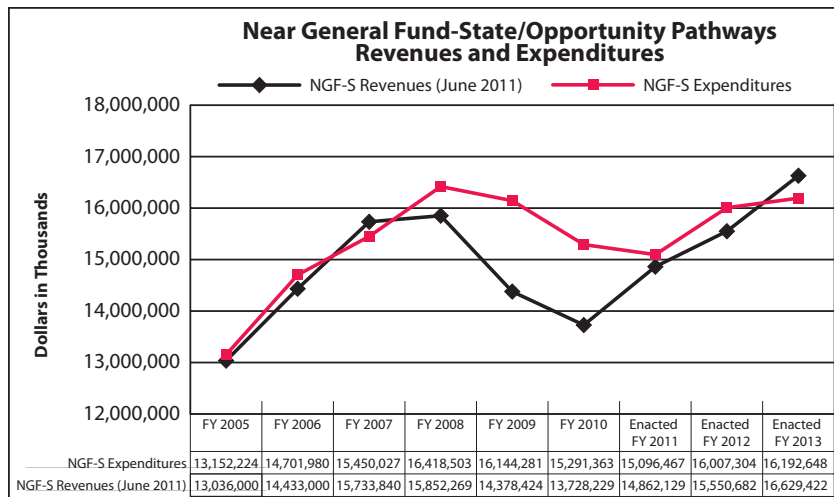
# Rep. Cary Condotta • 2011 Legislative Review

Dear Friends,

Thank you for allowing me to serve you in the Legislature. This year was highlighted by tough decisions and difficult negotiations. Positive steps were taken with the budget, but our priorities are out of line and there are key areas of reform we still need to address.

When the session started, the Legislature was trying to address a projected \$5.1 billion budget shortfall. We passed a \$32.2 billion budget, and for the first time since 1997 the Legislature spent less than the forecasted revenue coming in. While this budget starts to rein in our state's spending problem and there were pieces of the budget I agreed with, I could not support the final spending plan.

The budget was written with the expectation of an additional \$4 billion of revenue, yet education and public safety took substantial cuts. The state constitution tells us funding education is "our paramount duty" but this budget falls short. In fact, 41 percent, or \$1.8 billion, of the reductions came from education. It also fails to protect the most vulnerable citizens by sharply reducing programs that help our developmentally disabled find work, and harms our long-term care facilities.



While no Republicans in the House supported the budget, strong bipartisanship was shown in two bills designed to get people working again. We were able to pass unemployment insurance (UI) tax relief to provide employers a much-needed payroll tax reduction this year and prevent a sharp tax increase in the near future. The UI legislation also provides a more stable and long-term fix to the system. It will give our employers some certainty they need to retain existing jobs. Additionally, it provides important training benefits for workers who have been displaced.

The toughest negotiation of the session was workers' compensation reform. At the end of the special session, and after many hours in the governor's office with business and labor leaders, we agreed to a concept called structured settlement agreements. Rep. Matt Shea and I came up with the idea early in the session. It has the best interests of the workers in mind while protecting our employers from large increases in their workers' compensation rates. There are some unknowns with these types of agreements, but it provides injured workers an additional option to settle their claim. It will also begin to fix our broken workers' compensation system as it is projected to save the state workers' compensation system \$1.1 billion over four years.

I continue to be very concerned with the escalating debt at all levels of government – local, state and federal. We worked hard to stay under the debt limit by a significant amount. We prioritized projects providing infrastructure for K-12 education, higher education, and correctional facilities, and provided maintenance and repair where it is needed most. It was also the smallest capital budget in 11 years. I was pleased we were able to retain funding for the new Music and Arts Center at Wenatchee Valley College. Our community college is one of our most important investments in the region and I am pleased we were able to keep our commitment to the funding.

Part of the capital budget package was a bill that will finally allow us to work toward permanently lowering our state debt limit. It sets a statutory debt limit reduction from 8.75 percent to 7.75 percent by 2020. A Commission on State Debt is created to analyze our debt issue and

hopefully move us toward lowering our debt limit permanently.

Despite the immense challenges we faced, I believe the session was one of the more productive in many years. While we may not have always agreed, the reforms passed and the difficult decisions on spending should put us in a better position as we move forward. We may have finally slowed the growth of state government and further debt, but we still have much more to do.

I represent you year-round, so please do not hesitate to call or e-mail my district office anytime. Your input is very important and has a direct affect on the many issues facing our state and communities. Your feedback and input on the many proposals debated this year were crucial. Thank you, again, for allowing me to serve as your state representative.

Sincerely,

**CARY CONDOTTA**

12th District Representative